

**Annexation of Texas to the U. S.**  
**Gen. Hunt to Mr. Forsythe.**

TEXIAN LEGATION.

Washington city, August 4, 1837.

SIR: The undersigned envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of the republic of Texas in conformity with instructions from his Government asks the consideration of the honorable John Forsyth, Secretary of State of the United States, on the subject of a proposition for the annexation of Texas to the United States and which proposition he has now the honor most respectfully to submit.

In presenting the question through the honorable the Secretary of State of the United States to this Government the undersigned solicits in advance the greatest indulgence for the latitude which it will be necessary to take in opening this negotiation. The subject is one of so much magnitude that it is impossible in a single paper, to exhibit even its general outlines and the undersigned will perhaps have sufficiently trespassed upon the attention of the honorable the Secretary of State when he shall have in the first place briefly set forth a comparative history of Texas and Mexico which has been so much misrepresented by the recent envoy of Mexico to this Government and when in the second place he shall have stated the main ground upon which the union of the two republics is proposed by Texas and shall have concluded by suggesting some few of the great advantages both national and social which would result to the two contracting parties from the proposed amalgamation of their respective sovereignties.

With the exception of the first presidency under the federal constitution that of Victoria Mexico has exhibited a series of revolution attended with the most disastrous civil wars. Iturbide who was chosen and proclaimed by a licentious soldiery was dethroned and put to death after a short reign too turbulent to be regarded even during that brief period, as a government. The rights of property were not respected and foreign merchants as well as native were exposed to his rapacity. Witness the seizure of money at Perote.

After the downfall of Iturbide and the adoption of the constitution of 1824, which is a transcript of that of the United States affairs were for some time conducted peaceably and were only interrupted by the episode of the revolt of General Bravo the Vice President. Yet, during that period the laws of nations were repeatedly violated and the property of foreign merchants preyed by the corrupt and venal agents of the Government. (See the history of the claims of American citizens.)

The termination of Victoria's presidency was disgraced by the quarrel between the rival candidates for the succession which after a bloody contest terminated by elevating to the presidency the unsuccessful candidate General Guerrero, and the banishment of Pedraza his competitor. A short year marked with disorder and misrule terminated the career of this revolutionary hero. The struggle cost him his power and his life, and

the whole country was convulsed by this civil strife. The Vice President Bustamante succeeded Guerrero but the war continued in different parts of Mexico rendering life and property insecure. After a short period of convulsions Bustamante was banished and Santa Anna succeeded to power. He was elevated by the joint efforts of the aristocracy and the priesthood who made use of the successful soldier of fortune to overthrow the free institutions of the country. His reign of miracle and career of blood will be presently noticed. He is now at Mango de Clavo the tiger in his lair ready to go forth seeking whom he may devour. It is true Bustamante is again in power but it is notorious that the people have been juggled out of their liberties and are dissatisfied. The Government which was their choice has been overthrown and centralism forced upon them by the sword; this change sanctioned by much acts of a spurious legislature, and the States reduced to submission by force.

With this brief view of the factious struggles of Mexico, the undersigned approaches the exposition of the history of Texas, which he conceives to be an important preliminary to the due consideration of the subject of annexation.

Until the settlement of Austin's first colony in 1821, Texas, for the most part, was an unexplored wilderness. The Spaniards had endeavored, in vain, to rescue it from the wild tribes of the forest. So early as the year 1698 the old Spanish town of Bexar was founded: in 1746 La Bahia, afterwards Goliad; Nacogdoches in 1732; Victoria at a later period. But these old Spanish settlements continued to be surrendered by prowling parties of savage Indians, and, up to the year 1821, Texian civilization was only to be found within the narrow precincts of their respective jurisdictions.

On the 17th of January, 1821, Moses Austin obtained permission from the Supreme Government of the eastern internal provinces of New Spain, at Monterey, to settle a colony of emigrants in Texas, and in the month of Dece. following, his son, S. F. Austin, who had undertaken the enterprise in obedience to the testamentary request of his father, appeared upon the river Brazos with the first Anglo-American settlers. From that period may be dated the Anglo-American history of a country which has grown into notice with unexampled rapidity, and already presents itself as another monument of the indomitable energy of the extraordinary race by which it was populated.

In the mean time Mexico had shaken off the Spanish yoke, and established herself as a sovereign and independent Government. Anxious, however, to increase her political influence & resources by every means in her power, and prompted by a desire to repress the Indians on her northern frontiers, observing, too, the beneficial effects from the liberal system of naturalization adopted in the United States, she determined to pursue a similar course of policy in relation to aliens.

Accordingly, on the 4th of Janua-

ry, 1823, a national colonization law adopted by the Mexican Congress, and approved by the Emperor Don Augustin Iturbide, and on the 13th of February a decree was issued, authorizing Austin to proceed with his colony; which decree, after the abdication of Iturbide, and the change of government consequent thereon, was confirmed by the first Executive Council, in accordance with a special order of the Mexican Congress.

On the 2nd of February, 1824, the Federal constitution of Mexico, based upon that of the United States was proclaimed as the established polity of the land; and, by a decree of the 7th of May, of the same year, the province of Texas and Coahuila were provisionally united, to form one of the constituent and sovereign States of the Mexican confederacy.

On the 18th of August another general colonization law was passed and ratified, by the Supreme Government at the city of Mexico, and foreigners emigrating to the country, and complying with the terms of the said law, were guaranteed in the protection of their persons and property and all the rights, liberties, and immunities of Mexican citizens. Moreover, by the State colonization law of Coahuila and Texas, of the 24th of March, 1825, they were specifically invited to come and settle within the limits of that especial state jurisdiction.

Under these various enactments, but particularly after the adoption of the federal constitution, the current of emigration continued to flow in and spread itself with accelerated rapidity over the fertile domain of the then province of Texas. The forest gave way to the axe of the pioneer; the wild prairie to the ploughshare of the husbandman. Plantations were opened. Villages sprung up on the hitherto unbroken ground of the savage. New colonies were introduced, planted, fostered, and matured; and in the brief period of nine years from the first settlement under Austin, the enterprise of the Anglo-American settler had explored the whole southern moiety of the province, redeemed it from the wilderness of the wild beast and the savage, covered with a hardy and industrious population, and intermixed his labor with its most valuable soils.

True, in emigrating to Texas the enterprising colonist had expatriated himself, and foregone the well-tryed institutions of his mother-land, but the institutions he now lived under were modelled upon those he had reluctantly abandoned. His spirit, and his habits, and his inbred and uncompromising republicanism continued the same, and he was ready to resist the invasion of his chartered rights under the Mexican constitution of 24, as he would have been to have thrown himself into the breach in behalf of that sacred instrument under which he he had been born and educated.

Up to the year 1830, the people of Texas had taken but little concern in the series of political convulsions which had so closely followed one another in the interior of Mexico. So long as they were left unmolested in

the enjoyment of their own rights, their natural disposition for peace restrained them from participating in the internal commotions of the other States. But their rapidly growing strength, and steady adherence to republican principles, began now to attract the notice and excite the jealousy of the supreme Government. This was plainly evinced by the passage of the arbitrary law of the 6th of April, 1830, by which the further introduction or immigration of American settlers into Texas was expressly and totally prohibited for the future. Military posts were established over the province; the civil authorities were trampled under foot, and the people of Texas, for a time, were subjected to the capricious tyranny of unrestrained military misrule.

In 1832, Bustamante had established himself upon the ruins of the federal constitution. The colonists now flew to arms. On the 26th of June, with greatly inferior numbers, they besieged and took the fort at Valasco. They attacked the garrison at Anahuac, and reduced that also. This achievement was shortly followed by the reduction of the garrison at Nacogdoches, and, in December of the same year, upon the suspension of hostilities between Generals Santa Anna and Bustamante, the colonists found themselves once more in quiet enjoyment of their rights guaranteed to them by the constitution and the laws under which they consented to become Mexican citizens.

1833. Texas now conscious of her integral strength and anxious to be erected into a separate State in conformity with the decree of the 7th of May 1824 which had promised and secured to her a separate constitution so soon as she was in possession of the necessary elements of self-government assembled a general convention at San Felipe for the purpose of drafting an instrument suited to the wants and peculiar character and habits of her people. Accordingly in the spring of the same year, Stephen F. Austin was commissioned to present the constitution agreed upon with a petition for the fulfilment of the decree of the 7th of May. The respectful petition of the people of Texas as was treated with disdain and their commissioner incarcerated in a dungeon.

1835. Affairs were now verging to an important crisis. General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna had openly declared in favor of centralism which however specious in its pretences was really based upon the downfall of the State Governments and the consolidation of all power civil and military in the hands of a single individual. Many of the States had recourse to arms in support of their sovereignty and Santa Anna took the field against them. The blood-stained march of the usurper was invariably attended with the most triumphant success. One by one the States toppled and fell. The Legislature of Coahuila and Texas was dissolved at the point of the bayonet. The noble State of Zacatecos battling to the last for her liberties and weltering in the life-blood of her butchered citizens was forced to yield to the relentless terms of the dictator. Mexican